

The Honorable
Harry B. Mitchell
President
U.S. Civil Service Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Mitchell:

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Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of 6 February relative to the Federal Employees' Loyalty Program under Executive Order 9835 requesting that certain data be furnished from this agency to the Civil Service Commission in connection with that program.

All employees who are on duty with this agency have been cleared through FBI records for both name and fingerprint checks, and such clearances will be continued in the case of all future employees.

Full field investigations are also required for all employees, up to and including the Director personally, either prior to or, in some few cases where circumstances warrant, immediately subsequent to entering on duty with the agency. No employee detailed or assigned to duty with CIA, including senior officers of the armed services and of the Department of State, are exempt from this requirement of full field investigation under any circumstances.

I am charged under paragraph (d) (3) of Section 102 of the National Security Act of 1947 with the responsibility for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure. I consider it an important part of this responsibility to protect from disclosure our strength figures or any rosters or lists of individuals assigned to this agency which would disclose strength. The National Security Council has indicated its concurrence in this matter. Inasmuch as the National Security Act of 1947 became law subsequent to the issuance of Executive Order 9835, I consider that it takes precedence over such provisions of that Executive Order as are in conflict with my responsibilities as Director of Central Intelligence.

I wish again to assure you that the personal security standards of this agency are undoubtedly considerably higher than those of any other government agency, and there need be no question as to the extreme thoroughness with which we endeavor to insure the maintenance of these standards. Our investigations are made in great detail and cover every possible indication in the past life and associations of each individual concerned. In our final determination of the personal qualifications of any individual to be employed by the agency we examine carefully not only into the problem of unquestioned loyalty to the Government of the United States, but into matters of character, financial stability, and personal integrity which might in any way create even the faintest security risk to this highly sensitive type of operation.

We are now in the process of preparing suitable instructions providing for full coordination and cooperation with the Civil Service Commission Loyalty Board involving any case which may arise in this agency where there is a sufficiently definite question of disloyalty to the United States Government to warrant action under the regulations of your Loyalty Board. Each such case will be handled exactly in accordance with the regulations prescribed by that board. I feel, however, that I will be failing in my responsibilities under the National Security Act if I permitted the disclosure of our personnel strength and rosters, or the furnishing of investigative files in connection with current or prospective employees as requested in your letter.

I hope you will understand and agree with my position in this matter. If you desire, I will be very glad to discuss it further with you personally.

Sincerely,

R. H. HILLENBETTER
Rear Admiral, USN
Director of Central Intelligence

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